

Our People

Our members are the people that craft our association, continuously moulding our being to be responsive to the needs of the ACT community. Our members are our most credible reflection of our work, when our members are connected to us as an organisation, we flourish. We seek constant feedback from our members in order to better meet their needs, and we aim to provide services which are not only responsive to the needs of our membership, but also pre-emptive of future issues that affect the lives and wellbeing of not just our members but also the extended Canberra region community.

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are essential to our programs. Our WWX program is lead entirely by volunteer pool supervisors. 2016 saw this group win the Volunteering ACT 'Volunteer Team of the Year'! The supervisors not only ensure the safety of our participants, they create the community around the pool session that extends into the community. We have volunteers assisting us with administration, land based exercise and raising the profile of the association.

Our support groups

Our support groups are an essential link in the feedback loop between the Canberra region community and the organisation.

Our fundraisers

Raising funds to ensure the ongoing growth of the organisation is essential. Arthritis ACT in particularly thank the Victoria Shakespeare Trust for their generous donation, The Green Shed for their generous donation, and the ACT Austrian Choir for their ongoing commitment through their annual fundraising concert.

Our Board

Our association is lead by a volunteer Board according to the *Associations Incorporation Act*. Board members are elected for 2 year terms by the membership, and maintain fiduciary oversight, ensuring we are an organisation that can continue to serve the community into the future.

Our Staff

Our paid staff are small in number but large in both life experience and professional expertise that they bring to the organisation and in turn, the Canberra region community.

Partnering with our community



Our partners in the community are essential to ensuring our work can continue. In particular we acknowledge:

Our major funder, ACT Health Directorate, provides the base funding to our organization which allows us to directly impact on people's lives and wellbeing. This year we have secured

funding for the coming three years through the ACT Health Directorate.

Mobility Matters



Mobility Matters not only provide Arthritis ACT with valuable sponsorship, but also assist us at many of our community functions and provide valued goods and services to our community.



Moray & Agnew Lawyers provide the association with legal assistance as needed allowing us to channel our funds into community programs.

2015/16 in a snapshot

- 4000 hrs of warm water exercise have been undertaken
- 1000 hrs of strength and balance exercise have occurred
- 2000 hrs of volunteer support were provided
- 1213 people gained individual support and advice via our helpline
- 5000 newsletters were distributed throughout the community
- 120 general practices were engaged with to improve community understanding of musculoskeletal health.
- 100 hrs of community talks were delivered to improve community understanding of musculoskeletal health.



Annual Report 2015/16



**Improving the wellbeing of people with
Arthritis
Osteoporosis
and other musculoskeletal conditions
across the ACT region.**

Message from the President

Over the last 12 months, the Board has been creating a future for the Foundation that aims to ensure a sustainable financial future for the organisation to provide real and practical support to those people in the Canberra community with arthritis and osteoporosis, and their family and carers.

The success of Arthritis ACT would not be possible without the contribution of volunteers – from the generous and committed people who donate their time to help deliver our programs to the Board Directors who give their time and experience to ensure the business is run properly. We could not operate without your generosity.

Of course, the core of the organisation is our staff who through their competence and commitment continue to serve the 1:5 people in the region living with arthritis. I thank you all for your support and commitment to the Foundation.

Catherine Skippington, President

Message from the CEO

At Arthritis ACT our community is our purpose for being. We have worked hard this year to ensure our programs and focus reflect the needs of the community we seek to serve. We have worked in the ACT region community for almost 40 years, delivering evidenced based, people focused programs and services. In the ACT there are some 70,000 people affected by Arthritis and 12,000 by Osteoporosis.

We are grateful to our members who took the time to be a part of our Monday Morning Member's Morning Teas this year as well as our focus groups which helped the Board in building the strategic direction for the Foundation. We build our programs around the needs of the community, and these forums are essential for bringing our members together to help guide us in the right direction to be there for you.

Financial stability is essential for our organization. This year we have been able to operate our extremely popular Strength and Balance classes only because of donations from our community. We especially thank The Shakespeare Family Trust and The Green Shed for their generous donations, as well as the tax time appeal donations made by so many of you. These allowed Strength and Balance to operate throughout the year.

Thank you to each and everyone of our members for all that you assist us to do in the community.

Rebecca Davey, CEO

Improving the well-being of our community

Warm Water Exercise (WWX)

Thousands of hours of warm water exercise is undertaken through the Arthritis ACT WWX program annually, both relieving pain and discomfort in aching joints and muscles, and improving joint mobility, leading to increased mobility and stability of participants. Regular WWX is beneficial in the rehabilitation of joints after joint surgery, and for many, prolongs the life of joints, reducing the need for surgery, and in doing so, reducing the cost of joint replacement surgery on the health budget. Most importantly for many, is the friendships that occur as a result of the time in the pool with other people. For many of our participants, the friendships and networks formed in during WWX become the friendship and support networks they continue outside of the pool.

Strength and Balance

Strength and balance exercise classes have become a major reason for people coming to Arthritis ACT. Our classes operate on a 10 week cycle, with the program devised by our physiotherapist, and all participants are screened before the program and at the end of the 10 weeks to assess their progress.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi for falls prevention is practiced at the Holder offices of Arthritis ACT during the school term. Tai Chi has been proven to have a beneficial affect on arthritic joints, and gentle nature of the exercise assists the participant who may be at risk of falls and fractures with their stability.

Take Charge of Pain

Devised by Arthritis SA in conjunction for Flinders University, 'Take Charge of Pain' is a 2 session course that assists the participant to regain and retain their control over their chronic pain. Focusing on pacing, diversion techniques, mental and physical wellbeing, 'Take Charge of Pain' participants go on a journey where they get to set their own goals for their lives and truly regain control over their own destiny.

Yoga

Our accredited yoga practitioner Eli Haski undertakes both 'chair' and active yoga modes to both increase joint movement and to encourage relaxation as a form of pain control and distraction from pain.

Living with a life long disability

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The ACT was one of the trial sites for the NDIS. Early in the 15/16 financial year we were approached by many members and members of the community more generally wishing to utilize the Foundation's services as part of their NDIS package. During the financial year the Foundation has undertaken the ground work to become an NDIS provider in our own right.

Dietetic Clinic

This year we have commenced offering dedicated dietetic services to our member base. These one on one consultations with our resident Accredited Practicing Dietitian have helped our members not only improve their nutritional status, but have also helped them to achieve their own goals for improving weight management, becoming more active through structured exercise, and improve their pain management.

Physiotherapy Reviews

Many of our WWX participants in particular have been utilizing our program for many years with never a review of their exercise regime. Our resident physiotherapist saw this as a major concern, and this year we commenced offering our members one on one hydrotherapy reviews. This has had an added value to new clients who have not had to seek out a physiotherapist to prescribe an exercise regime, but instead have been able to utilize our own service.

Thank you for your donations

We thank the following for their considerable donations this year:

Tom Griffiths, Barbara McCook, John Fitzgerald, Virginia Brown, Louise & Kristin Chait, AS Johnson, Lindsay Ferguson, Jessie Terry, Jennifer Rowland, Sandra Mapstone, Nicky Gray, Angela Brown, Chris Bourke, Tom Tyrrell, Aleeta French, Rebecca Davey, Ainslie White, Nancy Smith, Elizabeth Raffan, Barbara Peterson, Denise Manley, Keith Gray, Helen Cody, Julie Cochran, Richard & Mirion Bearman, Jennifer Parmeshwar, Ron Lees, Margaret Smith, Barry Wright, Bill Wood, Natalie Wilson, Natalie Westcott, Valerie Van Someren, Judy Temme, Nea Storey, Margaret Smith, Patricia Sly, Dagmar Shepherd, Bogdanka Radovanovic, John Olip, Hella Munday, Ian Morris, Suzanne Mitchell, Margaret Middleton, Dawn Heinze, Wendy Milne, David Hawke, Jane Harris, Phyll Groves, Phyll Dance, Margorie Fitzgerald, Yvonne Bullen, Alice Bailey, Margaret Bailey, and the estates of Nesta Patricia Triffit and Gwen Balfour.